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THE
DURHAM
PAGEANT

1640—Ye Olden Days on Ye Oyster River—1776

DURHAM
NEW HAMPSHIRE

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An Out-door Drama Presented by the
People of the Town and of
New Hampshire
College.



*In Celebration of the Two Hundredth Anniversary of
the founding of the Durham Congregational Church.*

An Outline of the Story

The First Episode—The Pioneers of Oyster River

The period of these scenes lies between 1640 and 1680 when the settlers of the Pisquataqua region had made their way to the falls of the Shankhassick river, as the Indians called the stream, and were clearing land in the town of Durham. This company of bold and pious men and their families are portrayed as building a little settlement on tide water before pushing back into the wilderness to select land for their farms. Their leader is Parson John Buss who was the first minister to build a church on the river.

A band of Indians of the Shankhassick tribe has made camp on the opposite bank of the river while on a hunting trip. Their chief, Millikomett, is peaceably disposed toward the white settlers but his braves and squaws are of a more hostile mind, led by his daughter, the Princess Owaisco. They resent the invasion of their hunting grounds and begin a dance which arouses the fighting spirit. Parson John Buss crossed the river, accompanied by Ensign Benjamin Wentworth and Captain Francis Mathes, to offer gifts to the Chief and protest his intention of dwelling on friendly terms.

Chief Millikomett accepts the gifts and explains that he has not wished to attack these white men but that his followers are very difficult to restrain. They are hot headed young men and yet their grievance is just. It has been reported by runners that a flotilla of boats containing another party of settlers is on the way up the river from Dover Neck, and that this means more forests cleared and the game driven from its haunts.

During the conference the young Indians resumed their dancing and began to threaten Parson Buss and his companions who retreat towards their boat. The men of the settlement attempt to reinforce them and they are jostled and insulted as they make their escape from the Indian camp.

The pioneers become uneasy and alarmed and decide to put their wives and children inside the log shelters which are loop-holed for defense. Chief Millikomett is persuaded to lead his band in an attack after all his endeavors to calm them have been futile. The braves are determined to wipe out this little outpost before the arrival of the boats with reinforcements. Several Indians steal along shore to cross in canoes and flank the settlers from a wooded point. A second party plans to follow and attempt another ambushade. The main attack is made directly across the river where the Indians gain a foothold but are repulsed.

The flotilla of boats appears from behind a low headland as these other pioneers advance up the river. Alarmed by the war-whoops and the noise of firing, they perceive that their friends of the Oyster River Village are in danger of extermination. They pull desperately at the oars and open fire with their flint-lock muskets, at the Indians crossing in canoes and at the Indian camp. Chief Millikomett realizes that his forces are outnumbered and he gives the order to fall back and abandon the camp. Carrying their wounded, the Indians withdraw along the winding road by the river and are seen no more.

The flotilla makes a landing and the people disembark. There are reunions and rejoicing. Parson John Buss commands silence and the whole company kneels while he raises his voice in thanksgiving to God for the safe deliverance.

Copy -
Mrs. Hamilton A. Mather
Nov. 21 '20

The Second Episode—The Founding of a Church

917 The people of the settlement of Oyster River assemble in the wooded lane at the summoning beat of the drum, led by Parson Buss and his four deacons, The historic fact is that the first meeting house was built on the bank of the river. A later church, in the pastorate of Rev. Hugh Adams, was established in 1718 on the green, in front of the house of Major-General John Sullivan where stone markers at present indicate the outline of the foundations. This is the building from which the present church organization traces its history of two hundred years. The earlier meeting house of Parson Buss was no more than a



The Congregational Church of Durham.

rude log hut and the records concerning it are vague. In one of the cruel Indian raids which devastated the Oyster River settlement the dwelling of Parson Buss was destroyed.

The procession of men, women and children winds down the lane to the shore where a space of green sward has been left vacant for the site of their meeting house. They sing a hymn as they advance and group themselves for the simple but dignified ceremonial. Instructed by Parson Buss, the four deacons measure off the site for the walls of the humble edifice and drive in the stakes. The people follow the parson in a prayer of consecration and the procession marches, again singing, to the edge of their village and turn into the road.

The Prayer of Parson Buss at the Gathering of the Church at Oyster River

"Almighty God, Thou who art Sovereign Ruler & Disposer of All things, we most Humbly Supplicate Thee to withhold Thy Divine Displeasure & Look with Singular Favor upon us most miserable Offenders. We desire to Approve Ourselves faithful unto ye Lord Jesus & unto His Kingdom & Interest, but Satan has beguiled us & we fear the most horrible Pitt. Forgive us Wicked Servants & lett not Thy Awful Wrath fall upon us but restore us to our Intimate Conversation with Heaven. Through bitter Toyle and Adversities we have come to the sett Time to gather a Church in the Decency and Order of ye Gospel of Jesus Christ. Bless the Labours of our Hands & give us the Assistance of Divine Grace & Wisdom in Ordering the Affairs of Thy House. May we meete with the Conversion and Salvation of Souls. Grant us Piety, Strength Health & Serviceableness & Preserve us from Distractiion in our Duties.

"Good Lord Deliver us from Hostyle Savages & Save the Town, Church & Province from secrete Enemies & False Doctrynes & defend the Puritie of Publick Worship. Oh Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be All the Glory due. Amen."

At the conclusion of the episode of *The Founding of the Church*, the out-door stage will be cleared for the scenes of the *War of the Revolution*. During this brief delay the Indian youths and maidens will engage in canoe races and other water sports over a course which will finish just below the camp.

The Third and Final Episode—

Durham in the War of the Revolution

This scene occurs in 1774. A King's Messenger advances to the green beside the river while his drummer beats the summons to the people of the town. Two soldiers guard him. His intention is to read a royal proclamation signed by His Excellency, Governor John Wentworth, at Portsmouth, commanding that all gun powder and other munitions of war be delivered into the custody of his officers. The men and women of Durham flock to the green from the houses nearby. They are in no mood to suffer the presence and the mandates of this red-coated minion of King George. They display their patriotic sentiments in no uncertain terms. The King's Messenger attempts to read to them his proclamation which runs as follows:

"Oyez, Oyez, Oyez! ! Hear, Attend and Listen !

"Orders from His Excellency! Whereas, His Majesty, the King in Council, hath forbidden the shipment of gunpowder and other military stores to His Colonies in America, and whereas it hath come to our Knowledge that the Colonists of Durham have concealed and stored away gunpowder and military stores in open defiance of His Majesty's Command and in direct Oppugnation of His Majesty's Government and in most atrocious contempt of his Crown and Dignity :—

"I therefore do issue this Proclamation, by advice and consent of His Majesty's Council, ordering and requiring in His Majesty's name all Magistrates and other Officers, whether Civil or Military, as they regard their Duty to the King and the tenor of their Oaths, to exert themselves in detecting the places where said gunpowder and military stores are concealed, and to seize the same and the persons of the offenders and to secure said offenders in His Majesty's gaols in this Province in order that they may be brought unto condign Punishment.

"And from motives of duty to the King and with due regard for the welfare of the people of this Province, I do in the most solemn manner exhort and enjoin all His Majesty's subjects to give up and surrender said gunpowder and military stores and to offer up their persons to Justice. I lay this injunction upon you as you value your faith and allegiance to His Most Sacred and Puissant Majesty, George, the Third."

The luckless King's Messenger is finally compelled to take to his heels to escape bodily violence. John Sullivan, at this time a captain of the Colonial Militia, comes from his own house and surveys this lively scene with amused approval but takes no active part in it. With him are his friends and fellow officers of Durham, Captain Alexander Scammell and Major Steels. They stand in consultation and are interrupted by the sensational arrival of Paul Revere, who had made a detour from Portsmouth to bring the tidings that Governor Wentworth is about to seize the powder and munitions stored in Fort William and Mary. Captain John Sullivan returns to his house, having decided to take swift action.

Between this and the next scene a brief interval of time is presumed to elapse. A sentry by the river announces that the party of Durham men is about to arrive in a barge with the powder, lead and guns which they went down to get at Fort William and Mary. The people of the town flock to the landing. The drums sound the assembly. The barge appears from the cove where it has delayed in hiding, in command of Captain Sullivan. The crowd shouts a welcome and hastens to help unload the cargo and conceal it.

The scene following this is supposed to happen after the outbreak of the War of Independence. John Sullivan is now a Major-General of the Continental army, and is about to depart for the front. A company of his own troops has



The Home of Major General John Sullivan, now owned by Captain Lynde Sullivan of the same family.

been ordered to escort him. They march down to the river where he inspects them at drill. The people gather to bid him farewell. He calls for recruits in these spirited words:

"Townsmen and Friends:

Events are stronger than our wills. In spite of yourselves ye are driven on and yet would ye have it otherwise? Ye must choose. Stand by the King and ye be slaves. Cast your lot with the Colonies and ye be free men. Think ye, Chesley, and Thompson, Frost, Edgerly, Watson, that the part you took on the raid down the river is unknown? Nay, we are all tarred with the same brush. You were willing enough to bestir yourselves to seize the powder or to protect your wives and children against being scalped and tortured by the Indians.



Rev. Vaughn Dabney, Pastor of the Durham Church.

"Already the King's Judge in the Province of Quebec has written word to me that I and my family will be the first to suffer. Will ye men suffer less under the Crown if defeat comes to us? You have already taken the measure of the King's hirelings at Boston Towne. There they are penned in and there they will remain, by God's will and your assistance. But Massachusetts and Virginia cannot fight alone and they shall not fight without the valiant help of this Province, nay, this Commonwealth of New Hampshire.

"Will ye be driven to the wall to pay taxation to that fat-witted King George that he may wage war against the French? What care ye for that? Our own forefathers won this land and redeemed it. It is ours to own and govern and improve, and not the Crown's. The cause needs recruits for the army around Boston. Will ye men of Durham hang back? Are you anxious lest your families suffer? I pledge you my word that they will be cared for. Leave I not five children behind and a most lovely wife? Will ye be more backward than

Massachusetts? Will ye have those valiant men call you cowards? Join now for Freedom, Independence and Equal Rights. Come forward, Chesley. Come on, Frost. Join the ranks and march with me."

Recruits rush forward, others volunteer more deliberately. They muster in an awkward squad. Their wives bid them goodbye. General Sullivan says farewell to his own dear wife and children. The column forms and files off to the music of fife and drums.

This scene concludes the episode and marks the finish of the Durham Pageant.

Announcement

A dance will be given at the College Gymnasium this evening to which the town and college and our visitors are invited. An admission fee will be charged by way of helping to meet the cost of the Pageant. Some of the people will come in costume.

The Names of Those Who Take Part in The Pageant.

Parson John Buss	-	-	-	-	-	-	C. E. HEWITT
The Constable	-	-	-	-	-	-	JOSHUA PINKHAM
The Deacons	-	-	-	-	-	-	C. H. PETTEE
							O. L. ECKMAN
							J. H. MARCEAU
							DR. A. E. GRANT
The School Mistress	-	-	-	-	-	-	MISS SARAH LADD
The Indian Chief	-	-	-	-	-	-	RALPH D. PAINE
His Daughter, Owaisca	-	-	-	-	-	-	MISS HELEN B. BARTLETT
Major General John Sullivan	-	-	-	-	-	-	CAPTAIN LYNDE SULLIVAN
Mrs. John Sullivan	-	-	-	-	-	-	MRS. LYNDE SULLIVAN
Captain Alexander Scammell	-	-	-	-	-	-	M. O'K. MCKAY
Major Steele	-	-	-	-	-	-	E. P. ROBINSON
Paul Pevere	-	-	-	-	-	-	WM. PHAIR
The King's Messenger	-	-	-	-	-	-	F. W. TAYLOR

The Women of The Settlement

Mrs. Guy Smart, Mrs. Frank Morrison, Miss Polly Bailey, Mrs. Albert Littlehale, Mrs. M. O'K. McKay, Mrs. David Fogg, Mrs. Edward Griffiths, Mrs. Gertrude Emerson, Mrs. F. W. Taylor, Mrs. Wm. Phair, Miss Avis Adams, Mrs. Adrian O. Morse, Mrs. Charles Langley, Miss Elizabeth Chesley, Mrs. John Page, Mrs. Thomas Massingham, Miss Delia Langley, Miss Ada Langley, Miss Doris Burnham, Mrs. Charles Berry, Mrs. E. P. Robinson, Mrs. O. V. Henderson, Mrs. Lester Langley, Mrs. Charles Wentworth, Mrs. Harold H. Scudder, Mrs. Fred Daniels, Mrs. George Stevens, Miss Mary Hoitt, Miss Ellen Hoitt, Mrs. Edward Langley, Mrs. Edward Fairchild, Mrs. Walter S. Edgerley, Mrs. Dunovan, Mrs. Melvin E. Smith.

The Women of the Flotilla

Miss Helen Barton, Miss Ivy Belle Chesley, Mrs. Anna Rand Cook, Miss Gadiella Chesley, Miss Margaret Langley, Mrs. Thomas Massingham, Miss Ada Langley, Mrs. John Page, Miss Vivien Hewitt, Miss Sadie Marion Griffiths, Mrs. C. E. Hewitt, Mrs. Lewis Ellison.

The Men of the Settlement and Flotilla

Charles Berry, Stephen Chesley, Wilbert Chesley, George Langmaid, Will Burrows, Samuel Craig, Elmer Rand, Moll Crouse, Walter S. Edgerly, James Macfarlane, L. J. Batchelder, Edward Chesley, Walter Davis, Earl P. Robinson, Fred Philbrick, J. M. Fuller, A. E. Richards, E. T. Huddleston, Melvin E. Smith, David Fogg, Paul Evans, O. V. Henderson, Fred E. Jenkins, Frank Morrison, Earl Watson, Albert Watson, C. J. Fawcett, F. C. Werkenthin, Harry Rand, Eloi Adams, Mark E. Willey, Arthur Teeri, E. Cass Adams, Chester Lane, Raymond Brown, Wallace Burrows, Chester Hewitt, Rushton Marston, Raymond Jerkirs, E. G. Ritzman, George Stevens, M. G. Eastman, Charles Langley, Vaughn Dabney.

The Squaws and Maidens of the Indian Camp

Mrs. C. F. Jackson, Mrs. Karl W. Woodward, Mrs. George Langmaid, Mrs. Anna Bennett, Miss Lucie Jones, Miss Frances Kling, Miss Pauline McDonough, Miss Margarie McGoff, Miss Annie McWeeey, Miss Edith Morrill, Miss Fannie Spinney, Miss Edith Kingley, Miss Esther Young, Miss Kathryn Aldridge, Miss Esther Brown, Miss Jimima Dore, Miss Eva Edgerly, Miss Dorothy Flanders, Miss Crystal Goodwin, Miss Grace Hanscom, Mrs. Mark Willey, Miss Caroline Perkins.

The Indian Braves

J. H. Kendall, W. C. O'Kane, H. H. Scudder, J. H. Gourley, Charles Scott, H. F. Depew, Rodney Hill, Walter Stanley, Arthur F. Davis, Byron Chamberlain, Irving Dodlittle, Norman Purse, George Worcester, Hamilton Rumwell, Russell Foster, Walter Rogers, Geo. H. Batchelder, O. C. Waid, L. M. Dickinson, Burgess Nightingale, N. C. Osgood, C. F. Jackson.

The Company of Continental Soldiers

Perley E. Aver, Wm. P. Batchelder, Fred W. Bennett, R. F. Carpenter, J. E. Goold, Ernest W. Hewitt, Paul J. Lyster, Ray E. McDonald, G. W. MacLatchy, Clifton C. Morrison, R. L. Northey, George J. Rowe, C. J. Silver, C. A. Swain, Donald T. Thompson, Laurence M. True.

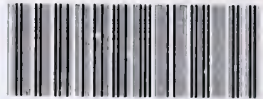
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